



***Ms. Mary & Ms. Minnie
A Mother and Daughter Story***

Can you imagine being 96 years old and homeless? Just think about it. Every day, wondering if you'll be able to once again call a place home. One day, you make a decision to change those circumstances. Things become brighter, and because of that, hope is restored. Until finally, there is peace in your heart again.

This is the story of how Ms. Mary, a 96-year-old woman, and her daughter, Ms. Minnie, found themselves at Panama City Rescue Mission's (PCRM's) Bethel Village. The Panama City homeowners were in Texas visiting family when Hurricane Michael hit. When they returned, their home was unlivable. Even with aid from FEMA, their insurance company, and Samaritans Purse, the women were still unable to remove all the toxic mold from the home, which prompted them to move to Sarasota to stay with family. While away, out of the goodness in their hearts, they allowed a woman to reside in their Panama City home. The woman agreed to pay whatever she could for rent. Upon recently returning to their home, they were met with the challenge of the guest who never paid them rent and was not willing to leave. Without a formal rental agreement in place, the ladies have been unable to remove the woman, and other unauthorized tenants, from their house.

With nowhere else to go, they walked through the doors of Bethel Village. When asked how we could help them, they responded, choking back tears, "**we're homeless**". You work hard your entire life, raising children, grandchildren, and generations beyond. Despite a lifetime filled with adversity, you achieve the American dream of home ownership only to find yourself now staying in a shelter. You may ask yourself how did you get to this place? How can I regain the **independence** I worked so hard to achieve?

The staff immediately welcomed them inside, treating them with dignity, respect, and compassion. They were rescued from a state of hopelessness, and found a clean, safe, and courteous environment where they were offered a place to stay to work on recovering their home and restoring their lives. All PCRM guests are welcomed in the same manner as Ms. Mary and Ms. Minnie. Each is given time and case management to meet their individual needs by aiding in regaining **independence**, gaining employment, and transitioning to stable housing. With the help of our on-site case worker, they are in the process of a formal eviction notice to remove the tenants from their home.

Since 1973, the Panama City Rescue Mission has been committed to Christ-centered rescue, recovery, and restoration in an effort to break the destructive cycle of poverty and homelessness.